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SUBJECT: KARBALA: SHRINES ANNOUNCE TRIBAL SHEIKHS CONFERENCE

REF: 00000109

[1](#)1. (U) This is a PRT Karbala cable.

[1](#)2. (U) Sayed Ahmed al-Safi, Head of the Al Abbas shrine office, conducted the Friday sermon at Karbala's al-Husain shrine. The message of this sermon focused on government support of budget execution, security and inviting leaders around Iraq to attend a reconciliation conference in Karbala. Local media coverage included Karbala Radio, and the following television channels; Karbala, Al-Iraqya, Al-Furat, and Al-Salam.

[1](#)3. (U) Al-Safi publicly admonished the GOI for having only released one percent of the 2007 budget to the provincial governments. He mentioned softening the anti-corruption law in an effort to reduce GOI reticence to release the funds recognizing that the rules regarding misappropriation are strict. He called for government officials to empathize with the people and respond more quickly to their need for public services. Al-Safi continued with his four week focus on security reminding the GOI to stand against violence in Diyala and Anbar.

[1](#)4. (U) The upcoming tribal sheikhs conference was the second topic of discussion during the sermon. He called for the meeting to be in Karbala or Baquba or Ramadi, but that the meeting needs to happen. Al-Safi explained that regardless of the location of the meeting, those who have suffered from the terrorism and violence must attend. Al-Safi reminds his congregation that Iraq's plurality is healthy.

[1](#)5. (SBU) Comment: Al-Safi calls on the people to support those serving in government who do so not for money or for power. PRT reminds those interested in the sermon that currently 3ID is posting them as they become available on the following website: <http://www.3idportal.3id.army.smil.mil/c17/RE O-HILLA/default.aspx>

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